

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No.

B3666

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Vernon Johnson House (Hoes Heights)

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number 4305 Dewey Ave ☐ not for publicationcity, town Baltimore, Maryland ☐ vicinity of congressional districtstate Maryland county Baltimore City

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Vernon Johnsonstreet & number 4305 Dewey Ave. telephone no.:city, town Baltimore Maryland 21211 state and zip code

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Land Records Room liberstreet & number District Courthouse foliocity, town Baltimore, Maryland state

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

Survey No. B3666

### Condition

☒ excellent  
☐ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☐ unaltered  
☒ altered

### Check one

☒ original site  
☐ moved      date of move \_\_\_\_\_

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

B3666    4305 Dewey Ave    Hoes Heights    Vernon Johnson    1930

The Vernon Johnson House is a two storey bungalow style dwelling with wood shingle siding. It has a high pitched gable roof and dormers in the eaves. The house is located in the historically black community of Hoes Heights. Grandison Hoes was a black man who received title to the area from his parents who were slaves. The land was originally owned by David Carroll of the Mt. Vernon Cotton Mills that were located in the valley.

Hoes Heights is a small community in the northwest section of Greater Homewood located on a high point of ground adjacent to the historic city water tower. It is bounded by Cold Spring Lane, Evans Chapel Road, 41st Street, and Hickory Avenue. The space between the houses and their alignment to the street is not systematically ordered although the lots are organized in a somewhat formal grid system. Hoes Heights is what used to be the highest point of land in the estate of David Carroll. The ground rises 360 feet above sea level, affording a good view down into the Jones Falls Valley and south along the Falls Turnpike. This house is bounded by Dewey Ave. on the west, Providence Ave to the south, Falls Road on the east and Roland Heights Ave. on the north.

The Vernon Johnson House is a large, two story, frame dwelling. It rests upon a concrete foundation and cellar. The front elevation exhibits an open porch with Doric pillars supporting the eave of the gable roofline. A large dormer has been extended from the roof and its gable end has been turned towards the street. Symmetrically placed windows are located on the front elevation. The side elevation has very little fenestration and the windows and doors are disproportionately small. The house is an impressive structure in the community and exhibits an aura of dominance on this site.

## 8. Significance

Survey No. B3666

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1930 Builder/Architect Unknown

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D  
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. B3666

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

4305 Dewey Ave. Parcel located in the Hoes Heights area.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Barbara Collins Turner

organization Morgan State University

date January 1983

street &amp; number Center for Built Environment Studies

telephone 444-3225

city or town Baltimore, Maryland 21239

state

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

## 8. Statement of Significance

It is not uncommon for groups of people who share ethnic identities to form urban or rural settlements where the architecture, folklore, and other aspects of material culture were actively pursued and transmitted within the community. In spite of the peculiar aspects of the black American's trek from slavery to freedom, black people also responded to the struggle for existence by forming communities and settlements consciously. What is needed is an evaluation of what is known about sites that are significantly related to black history. This evaluation requires expanding upon the historic sites inventory which is currently available and providing documentation of spatial relationships, functional characteristics, structural requirements, and modifications. Ideally, the findings here would be most significant where we identify spaces that were occupied by slaves, free blacks, influential black leaders, professionals, working class, and poor blacks within a relevant comparative framework.

The black town was formally conceived as a community following Emancipation and dotted the American landscape from 1870 through the 1930's. These were usually formal communities located along an urban access route. The urban enclave, on the other hand, is a black settlement which typically categorizes the early communities that are historically black in urbanized areas. It is probably the most pervasive form of community in cities and its remnants are extant throughout the United States. Usually, a patriarchal community was formed around a colored school or church, and houses were built by the families who purchased lots from the patriarch. As cities grew, these communities became annexed by the city and formed the basic black district in the older areas. The grid plan is the form determinant although a spatial analysis of the relationship between spaces and nodal axis points which qualify spatial hierarchies is desperately needed.

Hoes Heights was formerly a part of the estate of David Carroll. Mr. Carroll founded the Mt. Vernon Cotton Mills in the valley and amassed a substantial fortune as the original mill building, built in 1847, was expanded to an operation of five buildings. What is now Hoes Heights was named after the black man who once owned the land on Providence Street and the surrounding area. It is uncertain how Grandison Hoes acquired the land. There is a suspicion that his foreparents, being slaves, were given it upon their freedom and that Grandison Hoes came to possess the land later during the late 1800's. Hoes' children were all given a piece of land on which they built some of the houses that still stand on Providence Street and Dewey Avenue.

Hoes Heights has a predominantly black residential population but the surrounding areas of Roland Park to the east, Medfield to the west and Hampden to the south, have mainly white populations. A modified grid plan was developed by the community although this system may have been a response to a conception of formality rather than a consciously designed program. Our problem is to determine what relationship the various patterns of settlement formation in black communities had to conceptions of space, time, and good design when these elements were in control of the builder. We need to support the preservation of these districts in order to contribute to urban design theory a knowledge of the ways in which race, class, and space are integrally related.



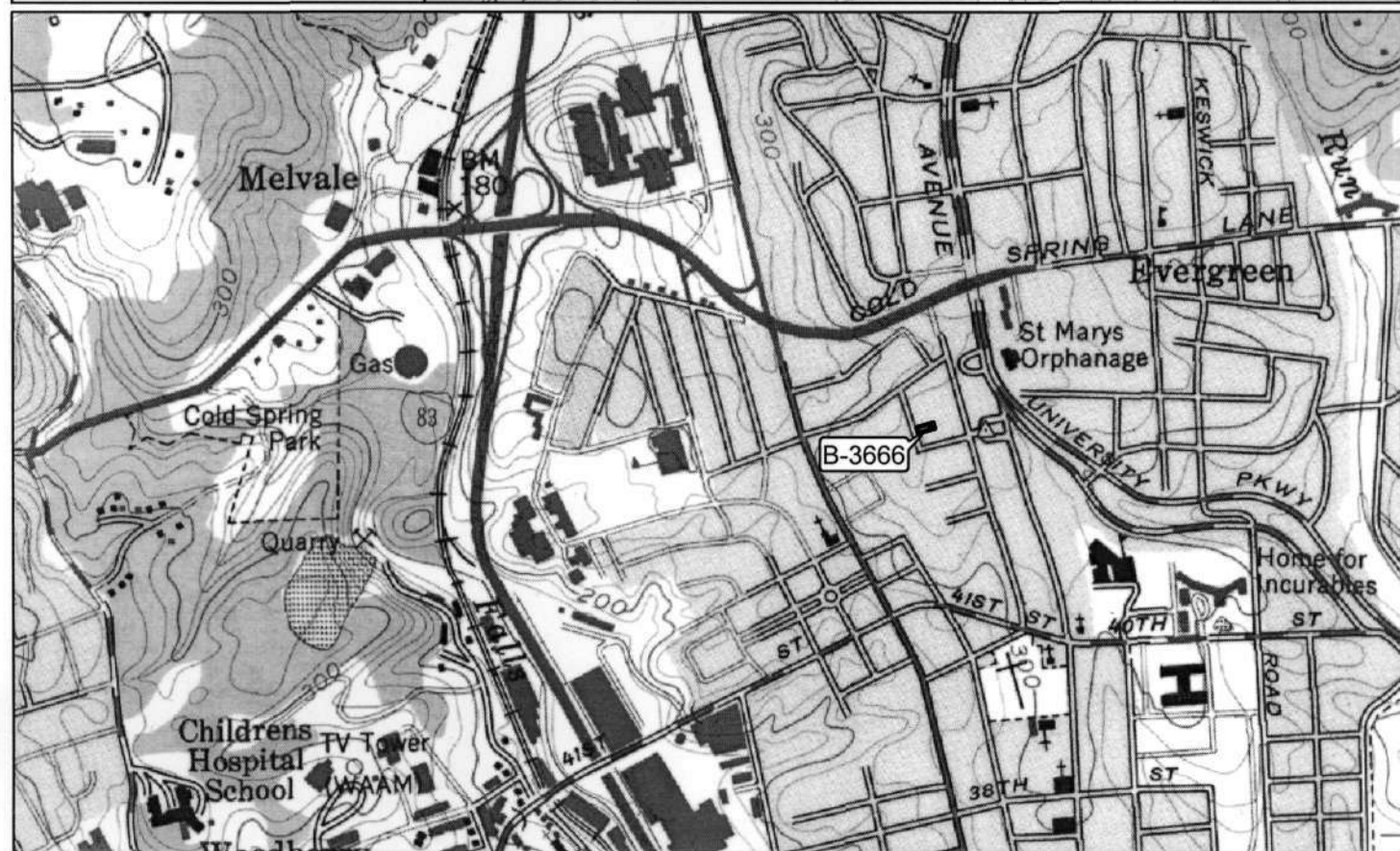
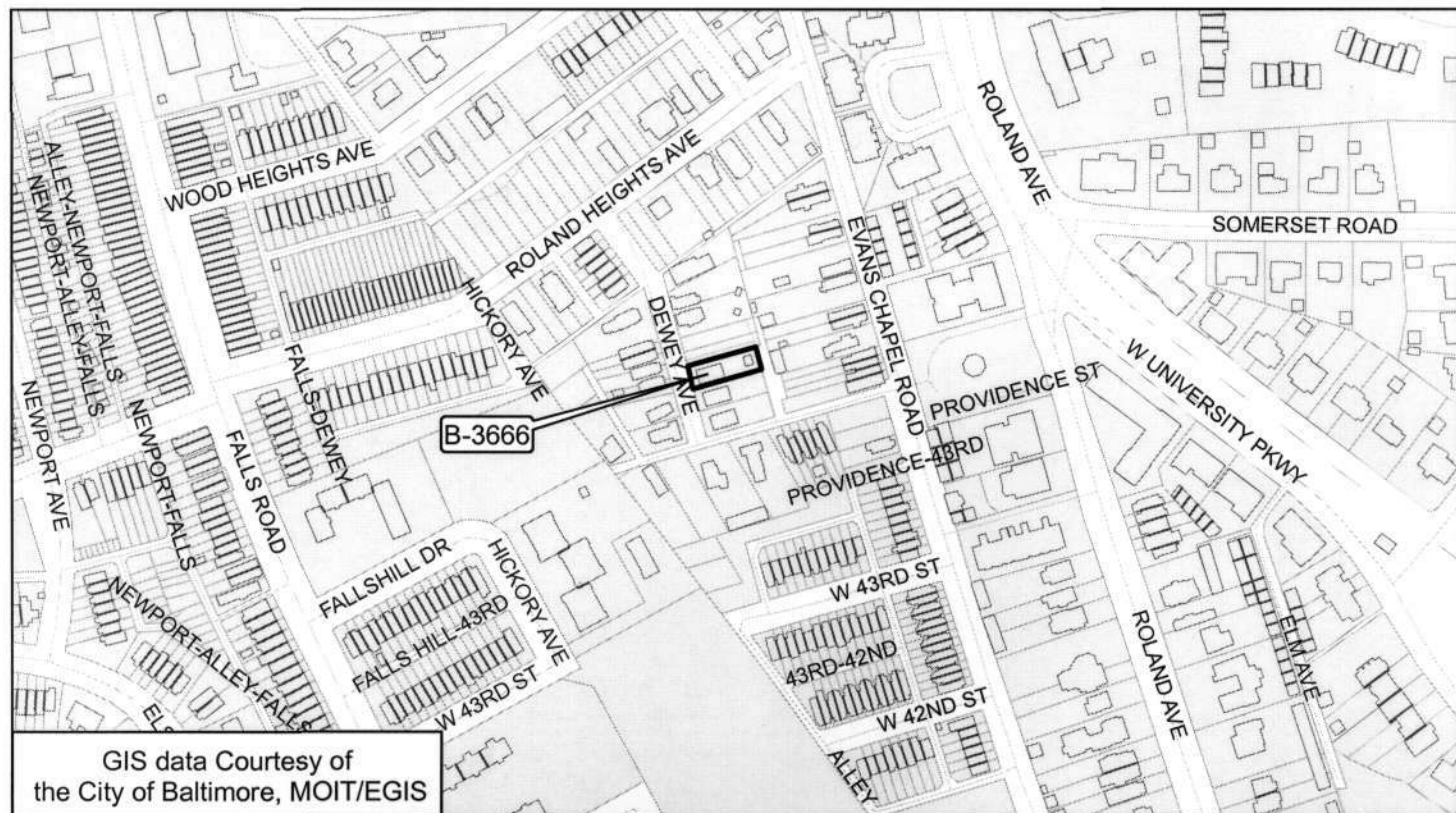


B3666 4305 Dewey Ave  
Hoes Heights  
Vernon Johnson House

903,000 7,500 WEST

6,000 WEST

B-3666  
Vernon Johnson House  
4305 Dewey Avenue  
Block 4917 Lot 050C  
Baltimore City  
Baltimore County  
Baltimore West Quad.







3666

B3666 4305 Dewey Ave  
Hoes Heights  
General View  
Fern Eisner, photo 6/82